

The Herd Theatre

Board Recruitment Pack

The Herd Theatre are recruiting new Board Members as we transition into a charity. We're at an exciting moment in the Company's development, with nationally significant commissions and a deepening local impact in our home city of Hull. This is an exciting opportunity to play a pivotal role in steering an innovative company making groundbreaking theatre and arts experiences for children and families.

ABOUT THE HERD

VISION

Our vision is for a society that respects children and the importance of their play. By creating high quality theatre and arts experiences for young audiences we show children that they are valued. We want this message to reach children wherever they are, whatever their context.

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MISSION

The Herd brings children, young people and families together in playful spaces to share exceptional experiences. We play alongside children to create shows, installations and experiences that celebrate, interrogate and nurture the joy of childhood.

We believe in the transformational power of family arts and create experiences that children and adults can share together. We recognise that some children and families face barriers to accessing the arts and we proactively explore ways of removing these barriers.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PLAY

We play alongside children to create ideas for all our work, play with artists to realise these ideas, and then unlock opportunities for our audiences to play.

FAMILY

We create mutually beneficial experiences for the whole family, as enjoyable for adults as children. We understand families come in all shapes and sizes, and use the word to describe a child and their responsible grown up/s.

JOY

We exist to celebrate, interrogate and nurture the joy of childhood. We create exceptional moments for our audience that sit outside of the everyday.

RELEVANCE

We ensure our work is relevant, exciting and truthful to children by collaborating with them in all stages of the making. Our shows and experiences resonate with children living through the 2020s.

EQUITY

We work hard to remove barriers children and families have to accessing arts experiences, with a particular focus on barriers facing working class people and those with a disability.

COMPANY BIO

The Herd Theatre was established in 2016 by Theatre Director, Ruby Thompson and Writer and Composer, Sam Caseley. We make shows and arts experiences for children and families with a focus on early years. We are based in Hull, East Yorkshire, and have worked across the UK. Ruby and Sam run the company jointly as Co-Artistic Directors, and work together to design and deliver the company's output. We collaborate with other artists to deliver projects and have a team of Associate Artists who have worked with us on multiple projects.

The Herd are an Associate Theatre Company of Hull Libraries, Back To Ours and Freedom Festival.

We create, produce and tour theatre shows for young audiences with a focus on work for early years. Our shows are delivered by professional creatives and always involve children in the creation process. Our shows are usually made in Hull, performed by professional actors, and toured across the UK.

Since 2016 we have made 18 shows, performed in 60 venues across the UK including Royal Exchange in Manchester, Southbank Centre in London, and Northern Stage in Newcastle, to an audience of over 60,000. Our show SLIME toured the UK between 2018 - 2022, received ***** reviews and was recommended by The Guardian.

We create installations where children and families are given the freedom to play together. This year we have created REPLAY, an 8 week installation for the Southbank Centre in the Royal Festival Hall. REPLAY has been listed as the number 3 top family things to do in London by TFL and Time Out, and has been extended due to popular demand. We have also developed a touring playwork package for family festivals, which has been delivered across the UK including at the University of Cambridge.

Our schools programme includes ONE DAY PLAY, an annual project that exists to raise career aspirations in Hull by opening up the theatre making process to Key Stage 2 Children. Last year 59% of the children on this programme had never been in a theatre before.

The Herd have trained college students at Wyke Sixth Form College, Librarians at Hull Libraries and volunteers at Absolutely Cultured in play and drama facilitation and have taught an undergraduate module in Early Years Theatre Making at The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

THE BOARD

The Herd is guided by a board consisting of professionals working across theatre, television, charity and education. The Herd Theatre Ltd is a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee, we are currently going through the process of becoming a registered charity. Our application to the charity commission is being supported by the legal firm Counter Culture and is expected to be complete by Autumn 2023.

Naqiya Abraham - Executive Director, Seenaryo.

Seenaryo is a theatre and play-based learning charity working in Lebanon & Jordan. Naqiya co-created the Seenaryo Playkit, an app for early years teachers. Seenaryo recently won the Arts, Culture and Heritage 2023 award at The Charity Awards.

Jamie Jackson - Development Executive, Gaumont.

Gaumont is a TV production company who make drama in the UK and internationally. Jamie creates shows and works with writers to get shows made. He has recently worked on Tin Star for Sky Atlantic, and currently working on shows for the BBC and Sky.

Anne-Marie Merrick - Freelance Fundraiser

Anne-Marie has worked in fundraising and development for theatres, libraries, heritage attractions and universities. She has worked with a multitude of organisations across the north including Stephen Joseph Theatre, Northern Broadsides, York Museums and Hull Truck.

Andrew Schimin - Retired Headteacher of McMillian Nursery School

Andrew was headteacher of a large nursery school in North Hull. Andrew oversaw the nursery's evolution into a forest school and has years of experience working with artists, children and early years practitioners.

THE HERD STYLE

Our work is immersive - we create spaces in which children and performers share the same worlds because we know that Children don't separate the stage from the world around them. We consider the whole experience of an event - what happens before you arrive, and after you leave.

Our work is intimate - we have small audience sizes, usually between 30 - 60 so that children and families are connected to the work.

Our work is for the whole family - like The Simpsons, Pixar or Ardman, we work hard to create moments that land for multiple ages. In our shows for babies, we're also thinking about the 70 year old grandparent, or the 15 year old sibling in the room.

Our work is surprising - we play with the familiar, we enjoy the abstract, we offer something funny and new.

Our work is contemporary - we tell original stories.

Our work is visual - often non-verbal or using minimal language, our shows are action and design led.

Our work is funny - we love comedy and the joy of shared laughter.

Our work is live - we're interested in the unique liveness of bringing a group of people together. Our characters always know they're with an audience. Our shows are a communal experience. We create a herd.

Our work is made in collaboration with our audience - we're interested in the experience of being young and work with children and child development specialists in the creation of our work.

Our work is accessible - we work with external access consultants in every project and show to help us aim for the most inclusive experiences.

ABOUT THE ROLE

If you like the sound of what we do and are thinking of volunteering to join a Charity Board, we'd love to hear from you.

The Charity Commission identifies six essential duties of members of a Board of Trustees:

1. To ensure your charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
2. To comply with your charity's governing document and the law
3. To act in your charity's best interests
4. To manage your charity's resources responsibly
5. To act with reasonable care and skill
6. To ensure the charity is accountable

HOW TRUSTEES MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO THE HERD

- Ensure that The Herd Theatre has a clear vision, mission and strategic direction.
- Approve and monitor delivery of Business Plan, including overall objectives and budgets while delegating implementation to the staff, ensuring The Herd's overall financial stability and sustainability.
- Ensure that the charity's governance is of the highest possible standard in pursuit of its objectives. This includes compliance with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To champion and safeguard the reputation and values of The Herd Theatre.
- Champion equity and diversity and ensure The Herd Theatre fosters a positive, inclusive culture.

- Act as a spokesperson for the organisation where appropriate.
- Have a willingness to contribute to the fundraising targets of The Herd Theatre which could include: attending fundraising events, introductions to potential individual or corporate supporters, or personal support through membership, donation etc.
- A willingness to use professional networks for the benefit of The Herd Theatre
- Periodically evaluate the board's effectiveness in consultation with the Chair and the Co-Artistic Directors of The Herd.
- Sitting on appointment panels as required.
- Acting as an adjudicator for disciplinary and grievance procedures if required.

COMMITMENT

This is an unpaid, voluntary post. Reasonable out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed.

The initial term will be for three years in accordance. After that period members can be re-elected to retain their position on the Board for a second, or third term if appropriate.

The Board meets at least four times a year, with an additional annual 'Away Day'. In addition to Board meetings, it is envisaged that a member of the Board will hold 1-1 meetings with the Artistic Directors, attend shows and other activities where possible, and represent the company at local, regional or national events as required.

Time commitments will therefore vary and a flexible approach is essential.

ROLE SPECIFICATION

Whilst we are keen to hear from applicants from a range of backgrounds and experiences, at this time we are particularly interested to hear from those with skills and expertise in:

- Senior Leadership at a UK Arts Organisation
- Law
- International Arts
- Child Development

We are particularly keen to hear from people from the global majority and/or people who identify as having a disability, as we aim to continue to diversify the perspectives driving The Herd, and are committed to Equity and Diversity.

The attributes we're looking for include:

- An appreciation of family art, theatre and live performance and a belief in the positive role culture can make in people's lives.
- A passion for the cultural, social and emotional development of children.
- A recognition that there is an imbalance of cultural opportunity for children across the UK and a belief in changing that, especially in regards to children and families living in Hull and East Yorkshire.
- Integrity, tact, and the ability to think strategically.
- An ability to collaborate and work as part of a team.
- An active commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- An understanding and acceptance of a Trustee's legal duties and responsibilities.

- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort required.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

- The opportunity to help shape the future direction of a vibrant company at a pivotal stage as we become a charity, delivering excellent theatre and art experiences for children and families.
- Flexibility when it comes to attending meetings either in person or remotely via video call.
- A full Trustee induction with current Trustees and staff.
- Training and professional development opportunities.
- Reasonable out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed.

HOW TO APPLY

Application deadline extended to Friday 13th October 2023

Email ruby@theherdtheatre.co.uk

Applications should be made by submitting an email with a cover letter explaining why you are interested in joining the Board and how you feel your experience could contribute to The Herd Theatre. In addition, please include an up to date CV.

We will also accept a video or voice note in place of a covering letter, if preferred.

We value applications from a range of applicants. If you need any assistance, have any additional access needs or would like an informal conversation before making an application please do get in touch with our Co-Artistic Director, Ruby Thompson at ruby@theherdtheatre.co.uk

Interviews will be held on **Thursday 26th October 2023**